



Black officer alleges racism on police force

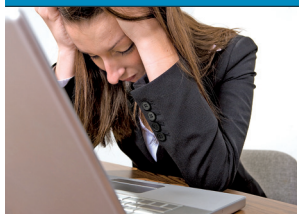
COPS Halifax Regional Police denied racism allegations levelled yesterday against it by one of its first black female officers.

Sgt. Robyn Atwell filed a complaint with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, alleging a staff sergeant pulled out a jackknife at work and elbowed her in the back.

Police spokeswoman Theresa Rath said yesterday the force has denied racism in a submission to the Human Rights Commission. No date has been set for a hearing.

METRO HALIFAX

Seasonal Depression



Economic woes impact holidays

Second in a two-part series, pg 6

Health pg 14

Happiness is still not for sale

Entertainment pg 15



Winslet's take on The Reader



Please recycle

Storm wreaks havoc

Severe winds knock out power to thousands of households

JENNIFER TAPLIN

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Winds reached near hurricane strength in metro Halifax early yesterday morning, cutting out power to thousands of households.

By mid-morning, Margaret Murphy, a spokeswoman for Nova Scotia Power, said 20,000 to 30,000 customers in HRM were in the dark. Throughout the province, more than 80,000 customers had no power yesterday.

To make it worse, the high winds that caused

the problem were preventing crews from repairing the damage.

"When you have winds approaching hurricane force at around 100 km-h, those winds are strong enough to whip down power lines all on their own.

"But add to that whipping tree limbs onto power lines, that's a factor," she said.

"We need the winds to die down so the crews can make progress and get the power back on."

Crews were "picking their moments" to send the buckets high into the air to repair the

"We need the winds to die down so the crews can make progress and get the power back on."

Margaret Murphy, Nova Scotia Power

lines, Murphy said.

At the airport, the arrivals and departures boards — lit up in red for all the flight cancellations — looked festive.

Airport spokesman Peter Spurway said it was a combination of weather conditions here and at other airports which caused the big delays.

"Some airlines (like Air Canada) made decisions

Sunday night to cancel flights in the morning," he said.

It was the snow and freezing rain on the runways Sunday night that made operations difficult, not the wind.

Spurway said the strong winds are a problem for small aircraft, but not big commercial jets.

The strong winds snapped trees at Point

Pleasant Park — the area which is still recovering from significant damage from hurricane Juan in 2003.

Due to safety concerns, staff closed the park to the public yesterday.

Highway 104 from Exit 4 at Amherst to the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick border was also closed for most of the day because of whiteout conditions.

It was reopened to most traffic by the afternoon, but empty tractor-trailers were told to stay away.

ShareYourViews

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Hanukkah Celebrating the miracle of oil



Prime Minister Stephen Harper, home in Calgary for the holiday season, lights a menorah at Calgary city hall yesterday in a celebration of Hanukkah.

Slain soldiers mourned

FUNERAL Two Nova Scotian soldiers killed in Afghanistan were laid to rest yesterday.

A funeral for Cpl. Thomas Hamilton was held at St. James United Church in Upper Musquodoboit yesterday.

The service for Pte. John Curwin was held at the Knox United Church in Lower Sackville. Both were members of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment and were buried with full military honours.

Curwin, 25, and Hamilton, 26, were killed by a roadside bomb west of Kandahar on Dec. 13, along with Pte. Justin Jones of Baie Verte, N.L.

Curwin grew up in Mount Uniacke and is remembered as a father of three and husband to wife, Laura.

Hamilton, on his third tour of duty, left behind a young daughter.

JENNIFER TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

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Mic Mac Mall

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Atlantic Superstore
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Nova Communications
167 Trider Avenue
Wacky Wheatley's
122 Main St.

DIGBY
Peck Audiotechnics
163 Hwy. 303

ELMSDALE
DownEast Communications
269 Hwy. 214

FALL RIVER
DownEast Communications
Fall River Plaza

GLACE BAY
The Rolling Phones
Peoples Mall

GREENWOOD
Aliant Store
Greenwood Mall

HALIFAX
Aliant Stores
Halifax Shopping Centre (upper and lower)

Scotia Square
201 Chain Lake Dr
5475 Spring Garden Road

CBCI Telecom
380 Bedford Highway
DownEast Communications

Maritime Centre
Scotia Square
West End Mall

Quarterback Communications
102 Chain Lake Drive
Wacky Wheatley's

201 Chain Lake Dr.
Wireless Wave
7001 Mumford Rd

LIVERPOOL
MacPhersons
137 Bristol Ave.

LOWER SACKVILLE
DownEast Communications
Sobeys, 752 Sackville Dr.

Atlantic Superstore,
745 Sackville Dr.

NEW GLASGOW
Aliant Store
Highland Square Mall

NEW MINAS
Aliant Store
County Fair Mall

Wacky Wheatley's
8961 Commercial St.

NORTH SYDNEY
The Rolling Phones
North Sydney Mall

PORT HAWKSBURY
The Rolling Phones
Shediac Plaza

Sobeys, 622 Reeves St.

PORTER'S LAKE
DownEast Communications
5228 Hwy. 7

SAULNIERVILLE
Seashore Electronics/
The Source by CC

Saulnierville Mall

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Video Focus
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Children's elective surgeries cancelled today at IWK

A broken water line at the IWK Health Centre forced the hospital to cancel children's elective surgeries yesterday and today. For more information, visit www.iwk.nshealth.ca or call 1-877-537-8819.

METRO HALIFAX

Local



Merchants unhappy with pricier cards

Credit card companies are introducing new premium cards that cost merchants more, and that cost will be passed on to customers, says the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. The CFIB says it's "nearly impossible" for merchants to know what processing fees they're being charged.

METRO HALIFAX

Grits rebuilt in '08: McNeil

PAUL MCLEOD
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This is the second of three segments where Metro talks to each of Nova Scotia's political leaders about the year that was. Tomorrow will feature Premier Rodney MacDonald.

It's never hard to spot Stephen McNeil in a crowd. The lofty Liberal leader seems to always hover a foot above the people around him. But recently his party has been much more obscure.

Since the last election, the Liberals have been left in the unusual spot of third-party status. But McNeil sees the party as being in the middle of a rejuvenation.

"It's been 18 months I've been leader. When I took over this party, we were at the lowest point in our political history when it comes to percentage (of the popular vote)," he said. "We've done a lot of rebuilding ... I'm pleased with the enthusiasm inside the party."

McNeil thinks the Liberals are much better positioned

for a rumoured spring election. He said he focused in 2008 on staying in tune to the concerns of Nova Scotians. That's why, he says, he pushed for things that didn't always grab headlines but he felt were important.



Stephen McNeil

But he thinks this minority government has likely come to the end of its life cycle and isn't working anymore.

"I've been constantly calling for a financial update wanting to be part of a provincial solution to try to deal with these financial challenges. We've had no response from government on how we can work together to try to cushion the blow that's coming."

Looking ahead, McNeil wants to focus on reforming the legislature to make it more efficient and open to the public. He mused about moving public consultations out of Hollis Street and into the communities across Nova Scotia.

Brr! It's only the first week of winter



A pedestrian walks through a wall of wind on Spring Garden Road yesterday. Wind gusts in excess of 100 kilometres an hour whipped through metro Halifax yesterday, causing power outages and flight cancellations.

Bluenose Tories get Senate appointments

POLITICS Yesterday was a good day for three prominent Nova Scotia Tories.

They were among the 18 appointments to the Senate that included CTV anchor Mike Duffy.

The Nova Scotians appointed were lawyer Fred Dickson, Rodney MacDonald staffer Stephen Greene, and businessman Michael MacDonald.

Greene was the chief of staff for Preston from 1993-96, after which he became executive director of the Insurance Brokers Association of Nova Scotia.

Under Greene, IBANS waged a PR campaign against public auto insurance during the 2003 provincial election. For the last two years, Greene has been deputy chief of staff to Premier MacDonald.

Fred Dickson, a lawyer with the McInnes Cooper law firm, has worked with the province on several P3 projects. He was a provincial adviser during the privatization of Nova Scotia Power and worked with the federal government on building the Confederation Bridge.

Michael MacDonald owns Fleur de Lis Motel Ltd. and ran unsuccessfully for the Tories in Dartmouth-Cole Harbour in 2004. He's also vice president of the Conservative Party of Canada and in his second term as N.S. representative on the national executive. In February he defended the party over its ousting of MP Bill Casey after Casey voted against the budget.

PAUL MCLEOD/METRO HALIFAX

NSP new HQ is OK, board rules

RACHEL BOOMER
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Nova Scotia Power Inc. got the green light for a \$53.4-million new headquarters on Lower Water Street yesterday. But stay on budget, the province's Utility and Review Board warned the power company in its decision.

It said it's concerned that because the utility plans to manage the renovation itself on the building, parts of which are over 50 years old, the cost of the renovation might go up.

And the board concluded that renovating the former

No rental options

- The original plan included creating office and retail space that could be rented out, but the board concluded Nova Scotia Power customers shouldn't pay for that.

Electropolis building, rather than renewing the company's lease in Barrington Tower or finding new office space outside the downtown core, was a "reasonable, but not compelling" option.

Nova Scotia Power plans to renovate the current Electropolis space to create a 110,000-square-foot head-

quarters by 2011 for its operations and those of its parent company, Emera. It plans to aim for the top-of-the-line energy-efficient LEED platinum standard. Critics complained that with power going up 9.4 per cent Jan. 1, 2009, the renovation was too rich for customers.

The board, however, concluded that an energy-efficient headquarters wasn't a luxury. "It is reasonable to expect NSPI to aspire to a LEED standard in acquiring new space, whether leasing or owning. To do otherwise would be to ignore the current environment in which NSPI finds itself."

Local lighting Hanukkah



Howard Conter, president of the Atlantic Jewish Council, lights the menorah during a ceremony at city hall last night. The lighting ceremony, which is traditionally held outside in Grand Parade, was forced indoors due to high winds and cold weather.

metronews.ca

What's online today.

Video Afghan army gets training from Canadians on Styrofoam battlefields at metronews.ca/canada

Video Canadians could have the first coast-to-coast white Christmas since 1971 at metronews.ca/canada

Video Grim economic news predicted for 2009 at metronews.ca/canada

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Allan Small on whether it's time to invest in gold at metronews.ca/investing



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Whisky maker appeals for name

COURT Makers of Canada's only single malt whisky are hoping a decision by judges will turn in their favour.

Glenora Distillers presented its case in the federal court of appeal this week to save the name Glen Breton Rare. The Scotch Whisky Association of Glasgow, Scotland, opposed Glenora's use of the word "glen." Scottish producers believe the word is synonymous with Scotland and can be misleading. **METRO HALIFAX**

News in brief

ROBBERY Police are looking for a man who robbed the Wildflower clothing store on Clyde Street yesterday at 10:16 a.m. with an imitation handgun. The suspect is a described as a 20-something man, five-foot-10, medium build, wearing baggy light blue sweatpants, a black bomber jacket with white and red marks on the shoulders, and a white bandanna covering his face.

PLOW A 52-year-old woman was taken to hospital

yesterday at 2:30 p.m. with minor head and neck injuries after a snowplow hit her car at the corner of Dunbrack Street and Lincoln Cross Road. Neither driver was charged in the incident.

COLLISION A woman who rear-ended a Metro Transit bus on Sunday night was arrested for impaired driving. A bus with a few passengers on it was hit on Joseph Howe Drive in Halifax at 8:20 p.m. The bus was stopped at the time and boarding passengers. There were no

injuries. A 61-year-old woman will appear in court on charges relating to the accident and allegedly failing a breathalyzer test.

ARREST Police arrested another alleged drunk driver on Old Sambro Lake Road in Halifax yesterday morning. A half-ton truck lost control and ended up in the ditch just after 1 a.m. The 46-year-old driver wasn't hurt but he was arrested for impaired driving after allegedly failing a breathalyzer. **METRO HALIFAX**



Postal worker Earle Hawley sorts through letters at the Almon Street mail-processing plant yesterday. Power was knocked out at the plant for several hours, causing delays.

Mail will still beat Santa: Canada Post

Power outage causes delay

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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Didn't get any Christmas cheer in your mailbox yesterday? Well, you're not alone.

The power outages caused by high winds struck the Canada Post office on Almon Street, backing up operations three days before Christmas. Most of Halifax didn't get any deliveries yesterday, but Dartmouth, Lower Sackville and Bedford got their mail as usual.

"It was a bit chaotic (yesterday) morning," said Genevieve Latour, a spokeswoman for Canada Post.

The plant went dark at 2 a.m.

"It's Christmastime, so we had some people here. We waited to see if it was going to come back, but we were informed by Nova Scotia Power that it might take a while," Latour said.

"We will have time to make sure everything is delivered."

Genevieve Latour, Canada Post rep

tour said.

Power was restored earlier than they thought — at 10 a.m. — so they called employees to come in for the afternoon to sort the mail.

"It's always challenging, but as usual Canada Post will do everything possible and impossible to deliver greeting cards and make sure all the packages are under the tree," she said.

Employees will be working heavy overtime and carriers will be making deliveries on Christmas Eve, Latour added.

"So we will have time to make sure everything is delivered."

Halifax-area lawyers given Queen's Counsel designation

HONOUR Well-known Halifax criminal lawyer Josh Arnold, veteran Crown attorney Craig Botterill and former Mount Allison University president Wayne MacKay are among 14 lawyers given the Queen's Counsel designation yesterday.

Other Halifax-area lawyers honoured include Dartmouth's Stephen Zatz-

man and Matthew Napier, and Annette Boucher, James Chipman, Peter Rogers, Maurice Chaisson and John Graham of Halifax.

Lawyers must have a minimum 15 years' experience and be recommended by an 11-member advisory committee to be named Queen's Counsel by the province. **METRO HALIFAX**



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6

There's growing concern for the safety of a Toronto woman missing in China. The woman's relatives in Windsor, Ont., say they have had no contact with her in almost six weeks. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canadian woman missing in China

Canada

Financial worries compound stress

Holidays and woeful economy a bad mix

KRISTEN THOMPSON
Metro Canada

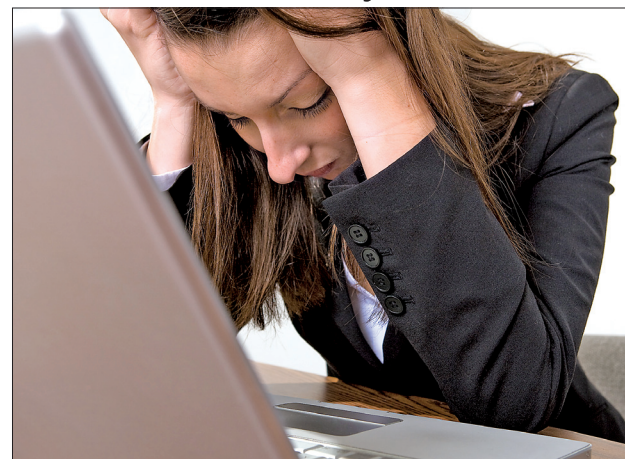


With many Canadian workers dealing with lay-offs or the worry of being let go in the New Year, the 2008 holiday season is turning out to be particularly stressful, which can lead to depression.

Kat Ivancic, 20, a customer service representative at a national bank in Vancouver, said everyone in her office is worried about losing their jobs in 2009, given the state of the economy.

She said while no one has been let go yet, the company is encouraging voluntary early retirement. "I've seen some of my older co-workers cry over it," Ivancic said yesterday. "(And customers) are coming in stressed out with financial crises, so customer service has got a lot harder ... I don't want to deal with (this) stuff, especially at Christmas."

Besides concerns over job stability, Canadians are also dealing with added workloads, low morale because of the cancellation of



As the world economy tanks, the 2008 holiday season has Canadian workers stressed about job security, which can greatly affect people who are susceptible to depression.

METRO FEATURE

Seasonal Depression

Christmas parties and bonuses, and the stress of having to tell family they've been let go. To people who are susceptible to depression, these can all worsen their condition.

"Things that are out of our control affect our mental health," said Dr. Joti Samra, a registered clinical psychologist at Simon Fraser University.

"(The holidays) are one of the worst times of the year to be worried about finances."

Samra said the best way to cope with the financial stress is to be adaptable and keep your family in the loop.

"Take a good hard look at spending (as a family)," she said. "Identify what things are in your control and what things are not. It's still a family issue, and one person alone doesn't need to bear that responsibility."

Crisis centre seeing a sharp rise in callers

CHELSEA MIYA
for Metro Canada



Where to go for help

- Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention www.casp-acps.ca
- Crisis hotlines:
- Halifax — Mental Health

Mobile Crisis Team 902-429-8167, 9am-5am, 7 days/week
• Nationwide — Covenant House 1-800-999-9999, 24-hour

The crisis help line at the Distress Centres of Toronto, one of the busiest in the country at roughly 120,000 callers a year, has seen a 22 per cent increase in calls about financial difficulties.

It's not bad weather blues but times of transition that hit people the hardest, said Karen Letofsky, the executive director.

And what worse time of transition than a recession?

sion?

"We've seen more and more people calling about suicide," said Letofsky. "Depression, heightened anxiety, fear of failure, fear of the future, wishing they could escape everything that's happening around them."

Letofsky said the worst fallout is yet to come, as the realities of lost jobs and homes sinks in.

Within the next few months the intensity and frequency of calls related to the economy are expected to increase, she added.

Woman found alive after being buried in snow for 3 days

A missing Ontario woman was found alive yesterday, after spending three days buried under deep snow in an isolated field in Hamilton. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

canada 7

Harper adds a blue touch to red house

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, whose minority Conservative government could be brought down soon, angered opposition parties yesterday by naming 18 people to Parliament's unelected Senate chamber.

Harper had promised not to make any more appointments to the Senate, which he wants to turn into an elected body. The Senate, the less powerful upper house of Parliament, is now dominated by the opposition Liberals, whom Harper accuses of blocking, or watering down, government legislation.

Government officials had telegraphed Harper's appointments, arguing that if the government were brought down in the House of Commons over a budget set to be delivered on Jan. 27, his rivals would then be able to stuff the 105-seat Senate with their own candidates.

"Our government will continue to push for a more



"These 18 patronage appointments show that when it comes to job creation, Mr. Harper cares more about rewarding his Conservative friends than creating jobs for Canadians."

NDP MP David Christopherson

democratic, accountable and effective Senate. If Senate vacancies are to be filled, however, they should be filled by the government rather than by a coalition that no one voted for," Harper said in a statement.

David Christopherson, an MP for the New Democrats, accused Harper of breaking his word on making Senate appointments and said the move would cost \$8 million at a time when the economy was suffering.

"Mr. Harper should be focused on the 71,000 Canadians who lost their jobs last month," he said in a statement. "These 18 patronage appointments show that when it comes to job cre-

ation, Mr. Harper cares more about rewarding his Conservative friends than creating jobs for Canadians."

The CBC said it was the largest number of senatorial appointments made in a single day in Canadian history.

"There were so many vacancies in the Senate that it wasn't able to function," said Steven Fletcher, the junior government minister in charge of democratic reform.

"We had an unelected body blocking legislation from an elected body — the House of Commons — and it wasn't a sustainable situation," he told CBC.

REUTERS

Husband gets life sentence for 'horrific' attack

MURDER Naked and bleeding from head wounds, Zofia Strojnik desperately tried to escape her hammer-swinging husband.

But she was too weak, and in too much pain. She made it out of their Mississauga, Ont., townhouse but was quickly dragged

back inside, her hand leaving a bloody print on a patio railing.

Yesterday, Julian Strojnik, 57, was given a sentence of life in prison for inflicting a painful death on his wife of 31 years.

The former bricklayer pleaded guilty to second-

degree murder in what Justice Bruce Durno described as a "horrific and prolonged" attack.

Under an agreement between Crown prosecutors and defence lawyers, Strojnik will not be eligible for parole for at least 10 years.

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for being chosen Metro's Koolest Hair Salon, as voted by Metro readers and Kool96.5 FM listeners.

Tune in next month to find out the next category of the best Halifax has to Offer!

An Aeroflot flight from Athens to Moscow turned back in midair yesterday after receiving an anonymous bomb threat, but no explosives were found after police searched the plane. The Airbus A-319 carrying 49 passengers had been flying for around an hour when officials ordered it to turn back. **REUTERS**

World



Green Christmases more common

The odds of a white Christmas in temperate parts of the northern hemisphere have diminished in the last century and will likely decline further by 2100, experts said. Even though heavy snow this year will guarantee a white Christmas in many parts of Asia, Europe and North America, a 0.7 C rise in world temperatures since 1900 and projected bigger rises by 2100 suggest an inexorable trend. **REUTERS**

News in brief

ANIMALS A pig that survived 36 days buried in the rubble of May's massive Sichuan earthquake has been voted China's favourite animal, but the atten-

tion has made him fat and bad-tempered, state media said. The hog survived on charcoal and rainwater before being bought by a businessman, who

named it "Zhu Jianqiang," or Strong Pig. It has been voted top of a poll of animals "who moved China" this year, the China Daily said. **REUTERS**

Russia boosts military

Russia plans a massive increase in its weapons procurement for three years beginning in 2009, with 300 tanks, 14 warships and almost 50 airplanes on the shopping list, a senior government official said yesterday.

Vladislav Putilin, deputy head of the military-industrial commission, told journalists after a cabinet meeting the government planned to allocate 4 trillion roubles (\$141.5 billion

US) in 2009-11 to modernise its army.

The move comes after Russia's five-day war with Georgia, which exposed a Soviet-style army with obsolete equipment, poorly coordinated command, outdated communications and a lack of spy drones and high-precision bombs.

Putilin said that over the three-year period Russia's armed forces would receive more than 400 new types of weapons, includ-

Longer terms OK'd

• Russian parliament unanimously approved extending presidential terms yesterday, an amendment which has fuelled speculation that Vladimir Putin will return as head of state.

ing 48 aircraft, six spy drones, 60 helicopters, 14 warships, 300 tanks and more than 2,000 auto vehicles. **REUTERS**

Obama's green team set to bloom

ENERGY U.S. president-elect Barack Obama's "green dream team" is committed to battling climate change and ready to push for big policy reforms, environmental advocates said.

Among Obama's picks are Nobel physics laureate Stephen Chu, who will head the Energy Department, and former environmental lawyer and U.S. Senator Ken Salazar as Interior secretary.

Obama has pledged to create five million green jobs and invest \$150 billion US in renewable energy over the next decade. **REUTERS**

Spain Winning the big one



Monica Torras, an employee of a ticket office that sold part of the winning number of El Gordo ("the big one"), one of the world's richest lotteries, sprays champagne at a lottery office in Barcelona yesterday. **REUTERS/ALBERT GEA**

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Comment & Views

Comment

'08 as ugly as they come

NationalReport



Lawrence Martin

As years go, they don't get much uglier than 2008. The economy started on a long and likely brutal plunge. The never-ending war in Afghanistan showed no signs of closure. We had yet another election which was dispiriting in almost every sense.

In this 21st-century version of open democracy, we had the Governor General make a critical call on our political future without a word of explanation for her decision. We had a Conservative government, which normally stands broad-shouldered against deficits,

usher in a period of deficits.

We had a government which stands for high ethics and transparency give us the Cadman affair, NAFTAgate, Maxime Bernier and Boobgate, the in and out affair, the shutting down of Parliament and election campaign ads featuring defecating birds.

Despite the Conservatives' repeated attempts at self-destruction, we had an opposition party so feeble that it actually lost ground against them. The Liberal leader hit new lows on the hapless meter, showing himself even incapable of producing a nationally televised video of himself that was in focus.

It was supposed to be the year in which we addressed the pressing matter of global warming. By year's end, green was pretty much forgotten and we'd moved on to other bruise-like colours.

We had a celebrated war general, Rick Hillier, who de-

The year featured a prime minister more interested in playing political poker than in showing inspirational leadership.

cided, just at the moment he was perhaps most needed, to call it a day. This not-so-old general faded away for no good reason and enthusiasm for our men and women in arms faded as well.

The year featured a prime minister more interested in playing political poker than in showing inspirational leadership on the major issues of our times. Stephen Harper closed down Parliament twice, once claiming it was dysfunctional when in fact he had gotten his way in the Commons almost every time. A second bolting of the doors came when Parliament threat-

ened to dysfunction him, forcing the PM to rush off to Rideau Hall to beg for salvation.

The fiasco that was the government's economic statement typified our year in the dumps. Here we were, on the edge of a global economic meltdown, and the finance minister could do nothing better than play cheap politics with it, bringing forward a policy which threatened to starve opposing parties of financing. That in turn somehow led to a spectacularly unedifying east-versus-west debate about separatists at the gates.

It was a suitably depressing capper to a relentlessly depressing political year.

In the nation's capital, the one good thing about '08 is that '09 can hardly get worse.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.

YOU MUST WORK IN THE AUTO SECTOR.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

'Powerful' message from Zambia



Tanya Kim

I returned from my first trip to Zambia recently. Taking time from my hosting duties with CTV's eTalk, I had the honour and privilege of working with CARE Canada. This non-profit organization launched the I Am Powerful campaign, which is committed to empowering women in the fight against global poverty.

In the communities we visited, I saw that with the right tools and training, combined with hard work and determination, women are able to lift themselves, their families and their communities out of complete depths of despair and poverty.

On my journey, I met extraordinary Zambian women who define what it means to

be powerful. They are strong, humble and exhibit fierce resilience in situations where they could easily be defeated. They showed me what it means to be a part of a community. From village to village, I saw women working together in support of each other — from building dams, to farming their gardens, to feeding malnourished children ... I feel so blessed to have experienced why the I Am Powerful initiative exists.

There is so much joy, so much pure beauty in Zambia! With so many negative images of extreme poverty associated with Africa, I am thankful that I was able to encounter a more hopeful view. In so many of the villages, we were greeted with welcome songs. The universal language of smile and song was always present, and although I was miles away from home, I felt accepted as a dear friend.



ETalk host Tanya Kim with her Zambian friends.

My goal in working with CARE on this adventure was to bring hope and inspiration to the people I met in Zambia. But instead, it was I who was filled with hope and inspiration after being so warmly welcomed into the lives and hearts of so many. The journey reminded me of the power that strength, hard work, and determination can have on

making my life better.

One of the most touching moments for me was during a visit to a gardening collective. The women proudly showed me the rows of maize, potatoes and onions they were growing, and danced with joy at sharing the results of their hard work. The group sells the produce, pouring all of the profits back into helping their communities.

I left Zambia with a renewed sense of the importance of passion for your work and compassion for others. I am so fortunate to have a career I love, close family and friends, and I am reinvigorated to continue working to help the people around me. We all have a role to play in the fight against poverty. Every little bit helps in making a difference.

Tanya Kim is the host of eTalk and one of Canada's leading authorities on music and popular culture.

Letters

Decision to bail out Big Three appalling

I am writing as a concerned Canadian who is appalled by the decision to bail out the Big Three in Canada and the U.S.

I understand the role these companies play in providing jobs, and therefore their role in the greater economy. But I feel it is unjust to support them by taking from the pockets of working Canadians.

Free-market capitalism, as I understand it, dictates that producers must supply a product to the market that meets a demand, thereby securing profit and allowing said producers to remain in the marketplace, independent of government intervention. This is the same fiscal model the Conservative government of Canada endorses as a justification for the failure to address rampant homelessness, poverty and ecological irresponsibility.

Perhaps the government should, rather than handing out taxpayers' money, suggest that the Big Three work toward developing more affordable, sustainable and marketable products.

RUSSELL MCGEE, EDMONTON

Let's not forget that royalists built Canada

Re: Are we still a colony? (Dec. 16).

Although Prime Minister Stephen Harper deserves to be criticized for manipulating the Governor General to prorogue the parliament, Lawrence Martin's reference to former Ottawa Citizen editor Keith Spicer's comparison of Canada with Zimbabwe is uncalled for. Both Martin and Spicer seem to have forgotten that it is the royalists who transformed Canada from an overwhelmingly French-speaking country to an overwhelmingly English-speaking one.

Martin fails to realize that Canada is not simply another former British colony like India, Australia or New Zealand. It is a country which was founded by a group of people who left their homes and hearths because of their loyalty to the crown.

As for the Governor General, let the Queen choose her own representative without any interference. This will make him or her to act freely without being manipulated by the prime minister.

MAHMOOD ELAHI, OTTAWA

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: halifaxletters@metronews.ca

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Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

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Recession mindset fuels slide

Consumer confidence in Canada dropped for a third consecutive month in December, hitting a 27-year low as a "psychology of recession" tightened its grip on Canadians, the Conference Board of Canada said yesterday.

The index in December fell to 67.7 from 71.0 in November, the lowest mark since the 63.0 recorded during the recession of 1981-82. The index was 100 in 2002.

"Consumers continue to be gloomy about their financial situation, indicating that they are financially worse off today than they were six months ago. Similarly, they expect to be worse off six months from now," Conference Board chief economist Glen Hodgson told a news conference.

"People understand that the U.S. economy is in recession, they're worried about the impact on exports and their own jobs now ... in the last month

"In the last month that loss of confidence has become very personal. People are worried about their own financial circumstances."

Glen Hodgson, Conference Board economist

that loss of confidence has become very personal. People are worried about their own financial circumstances."

He also said the board was revising its forecast for 2009 and would most likely come out with a gloomier set of figures early in the new year.

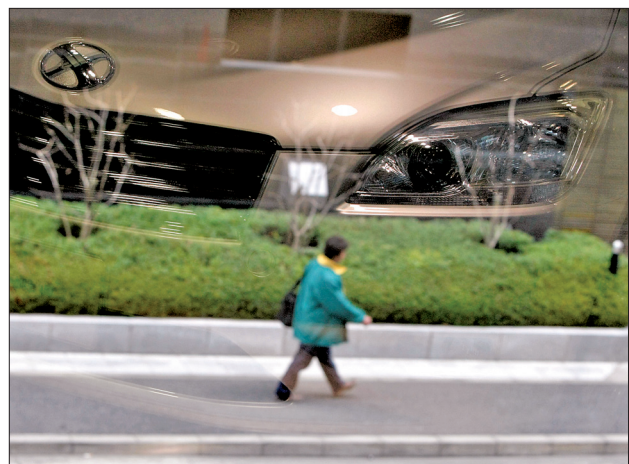
Last month the board said the economy in the manufacturing heartland of Ontario would grow by just 0.8 per cent next year.

The survey showed confidence across the country dropped in December, most notably in Ontario,

despite steadily falling prices for gasoline. "People are now

translating the bad news in the United States into anticipated bad news from themselves. But part of this is also psychological because we have not seen the kind of decline in our economy that's happened in the United States, in Japan and Europe," said Hodgson.

REUTERS



A Toyota Motor Corp's car is reflected in a window of a Toyota showroom in Yokohama, south of Tokyo, yesterday.

Toyota forecasts its first operating loss

AUTOS Toyota Motor Corp., the world's biggest automaker, yesterday forecast its first group operating loss due to a relentless global slide in car sales and a crippling rise in the yen.

Toyota had been expected to issue its second profit warning in less than seven weeks, after domestic rival Honda Motor Co. also took the rare step of altering its guidance outside the usual quarterly reporting season, but the downward revision was bigger than predicted.

"This is very, very, very bad," said Koichi Ogawa, chief portfolio manager at Daiwa SB Investments. "There's a chance they could fall into the red in the next business year as well."

"This is also not just a problem for Toyota. What is good for Toyota is good

for the Japanese economy." Automakers around the world face their toughest business environment in recent memory, caught in a sharp reversal of demand as the financial crisis spread globally, squeezing credit and consumer sentiment.

Toyota, one of the fastest-growing major automakers until last year, has been particularly vulnerable after it rushed to add production capacity that quickly became redundant.

Toyota has idled factories, slowed assembly lines and delayed manufacturing projects, such as the start of a new Mississippi plant under construction to build the Prius hybrid model.

REUTERS

News from HQ

- Toyota cut its group-operating forecast to a loss of 150 billion yen (\$1.7 billion US) for the year to end-March, after slashing its operating profit forecast by one trillion yen to 600 billion yen last month.

Business in brief

LEGAL Electronics retailer Circuit City Stores got final U.S. Bankruptcy Court approval yesterday for \$1.1 billion US in debtor-in-possession financing to provide liquidity as it reorganizes. The financing enables the retailer to pay vendors and other business partners for goods and services received. The courts also approved a motion that would let Circuit City void employment and severance contracts with 40 former workers, including its chairman and chief executive.

REUTERS

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EU seeks WTO case to settle trade 'beef'

TRADE The European Union launched a case at the World Trade Organization yesterday to test whether its restrictions on beef treated with growth hormones comply with global trade rules.

The move by Brussels is the latest twist in a complex case which has stretched WTO jurisprudence to the limits.

"We are convinced that our legislation on hormones is fully in line with WTO law: The restrictions on hormone-treated beef are based on solid scientific evidence showing risks for human health," EU trade spokesman Peter Power said in a statement. "We are thus very confident and hope that the U.S.

and Canada will engage constructively in these consultations and that we can find a solution to this long-lasting dispute."

REUTERS

A beef history

- The EU has banned growth-promoting hormones and imports of hormone-treated meat since the early 1980s.
- This ban was challenged by the United States and Canada in 1996.
- The Appellate Body declared the ban was against WTO rules in 1998.
- A year later the United States and Canada imposed trade sanctions.

Grey Wolf shares fall as Precision takeover nears

TAKEOVER Shares in oil drilling firm Grey Wolf Inc. fell by more than half yesterday, reflecting a drop in the price of units of buyer Precision Drilling Trust, which expects to close a takeover of Grey Wolf today.

Precision, Canada's biggest oil and gas drilling company, announced the \$2 billion US acquisition of Houston-based Grey Wolf in August as it looked to hasten an expansion of its U.S. business.

Precision's units in Toronto have fallen 60 per cent since the offer, hammered by global economic turmoil and weak oil and gas prices, and the share portion of Precision's offer is now worth a third of its original value.

REUTERS

THE DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ

N.S. No. 2 in wage increases:

The average weekly earnings of employees increased 0.3 per cent from September to \$801.24 in October. The strongest year-over-year earnings growth were reported in Alberta (4.3 per cent), Nova Scotia (4.1 per cent) and Saskatchewan (4.0 per cent).

Agricultural investments:

Four agricultural companies have been awarded \$3.2 million in funding from the provincial government through the Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund. Melvin Farms Ltd., Farmer John's Herbs, Van Dyk's Health Products Juice Ltd., Acadian Maple Products Ltd. will increase production, add processing infrastructure or expand into new markets.

More expenditures approved:

The province has approved \$59 million in additional appropriations to cover higher expenses in the next fiscal year. Finance Minister Michael Baker says additional appropriations are needed to cover higher expenses in several areas beyond the expenditure management program.

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business 11

Your Money

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

'Tis the season to give back

SmartCookies



By now you've probably done your fair share of dodging crowds at the mall and most likely made the majority of your obligatory party rounds — gaining a pound or two in the process!

And as your thoughts turn to how you are going to complete the holiday shopping in time, it's important to take a time out to consider helping those less fortunate. We've compiled a list of ways that you and your family can give back this holiday season without taking up too much time or money.

Time:

Donating your time to a cause is an incredibly generous way to give. Choose an organization that is important to you and would be in need of volunteers. Maybe you have a charity that are involved with or you have heard of a local charity that you think would be a good fit.

Skills:

Just like we suggest you use your skills and experience to barter for products or services, you can also use your skills and services to give back. Some of us

If our wallets are feeling the pinch then you can be certain all of the organizations that assist others are also feeling it. Every little bit counts for families in need this season.

use our marketing/PR skills to give back to local organizations like Feed the Need and Quest. Consider a skill that you have that would be helpful to a charitable organization. Anything from working on an organization's website, to writing newsletters, recruiting volunteers or organizing fundraising activities would be appreciated.

Items:

At this time of year many charities prefer unwrapped gifts and food donations. However there are a number of organizations that will take everything from gently used clothing items to household items, blankets, etc. Contact your local shelters to find out what they need the most during the holidays.

Money:

When donating money to a charity, make sure they are a trustworthy and well managed organization so you are able to give confidently. You want to ensure your hard earned and generous donation is going towards the right thing. It's a great idea to contact the organization of interest and ask about how donated money is allocated and what the short and long terms goals are of the organization. It's also a great

idea to confirm how much money you need to donate in order to receive a tax receipt.

If our wallets are feeling the pinch then you can be certain all of the organizations that assist others are also feeling it. Every little bit counts for families in need this season.

For a list of local charities in your area check out charity.com

Happy Giving and Happy Holidays!

Contact us at smartcookies@metronews.ca. For more tips for saving and giving back, check out Smart Cookies Guide to Making More Dough, available in bookstores.

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Ways to save big on meals at home

AllRecipes.com recently posted its largest traffic month ever in November with 10.7 million people visiting the site in search of recipes. The popular food site also found that 80 per cent of participants in a recent survey said they'd be cooking at home more in 2009. Use these tips to save money:

- Make a meal plan. The easiest way to save money is to plan your meals for each night of the week — it's a lot less tempting to order a pizza.
- Plan weekly menus around what's on sale. Before you write up your weekly meal plan read through the grocery ads to see what's on sale. Quick tip: visit RecipeMatcher.com, enter the on-sale foods and ingredients you have on hand to instantly generate recipes.
- Choose recipes with a low price per serving. Build meals around less expensive meats

like split chicken breasts, pork chops and stew meat. Check out 5DollarDinners.com for meals that can be made for \$5 or less (for a family of four).

- Use coupons for your entire meal. Seek out coupons for every component of your meals, like Meal Deal coupons on Shortcuts.com.
- Go vegetarian once a week. Save extra cash by going meatless once a week. Good choices include spaghetti, chili or even omelettes.
- Opt for frozen foods. Don't reach for TV dinners, but rather frozen vegetables and chicken that can be whipped up into a meal.
- Be smart about private label items. In many cases you can save by opting for the private label over a brand name, but by being smart about coupons, you can often get the brand name for less than the private label.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Investing

Allan Small



The week's column investigates whether it's a good time to buy gold. Visit metronews.ca

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong



choochonghcg@yahoo.ca

This past year has been financially difficult. Two years ago, my wife, newborn and I moved into our first home. If I used my CIBC RRSP shares for paying down my mortgage and the balance to re-purchase

another stock, what capital gains will I pay? Can I defer my Homebuyers Plan repayment this year?

Sameer

A Spirits are definitely low this holiday season with stock portfolios hemorrhaging, real estate values declining and increased unemployment in the horizon. For many it may not be the season to be jolly. Although there will continue to be negative economic news in the media, 'tis not the season to lose hope.

We should all be mindful of our environment and take necessary steps for the worst outcome.

You are not taxed on the capital appreciation in your RRSP but withdrawals will be fully taxable at your marginal tax rate. The repurchase of stocks will not reduce your tax burden and you must include, as income, the annual non-repayment of HBP.

Planning for what could be the worst recession in several decades will require discipline and sacri-

fice. Of course, one's luxury is another's necessity. We all must find a balance that fits our lifestyle.

Increase income

Look for opportunities to increase your income. Ask for a raise, another position or more work (pay as well) at your current job. Second jobs can do wonders. It's more interesting than being a couch potato.

Spend less than you earn

Create a cash flow budget. There should be no months that cash out exceeds cash in. You are liv-

ing on the edge.

Consolidate credit cards and bank accounts

Keep no more than one or two credit cards. Why have temptations? Why pay interest on some cards at 12 per cent and others at 28 per cent? Get rid of the higher interest cards. Reduce bank charges on your bank accounts. Who needs a chequing, savings, chequing-savings, high interest savings, low fee chequing accounts? One or two accounts are all you need.

Pay yourself first

Arrange pre-authorized deposits directly from your pay. What you don't get, you won't miss.

Invest on a regular basis

Don't just invest when the stock market is booming. Believe it or not, "stock" and "boom" can be in the same sentence.

No plan will succeed unless it is implemented. Begin with one goal before doing another, but start!

Reach Henry Choo Chong, CGA, at choochonghcg@yahoo.ca.

Start planning now for long-term financial survival

Sports

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Cavaliers deny interest in VC

According to a report by CBS Sports, the Cleveland Cavaliers have denied they have interest in trading for Nets star and former Toronto Raptor Vince Carter. The Cavs are expected to be a player in the NBA trade market before the trading deadline on Feb. 19.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sid breaks slump with disputed OT winner

NHL RESULT

Penguins 4 Sabres 3 (OT)



Sidney Crosby's deflection goal 43 seconds into overtime sent Pittsburgh over Buffalo 4-3 last night at HSBC Arena in Buffalo.

Early in the extra session, Alex Goligoski gained control of the puck in the left circle and slipped a bouncing pass to the right circle for Evgeni Malkin. His fluttering one-timer knuckled toward the crease, where Cole Harbour's Crosby tipped it home with his stick just below the crossbar.

For the Penguins captain, it was his first goal in

10 games, dating back to a hat trick on Nov. 29 against the New Jersey Devils.

The play survived a two-minute video review that confirmed Crosby's stick was under the crossbar when he touched it after Malkin did.

Marc-Andre Fleury made 32 saves to earn his 10th win of the season.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Sidney Crosby braces for a check from Toni Lydman last night.

Eriksson leads NHL's Three Stars

NHL Dallas Stars left wing Loui Eriksson, Philadelphia Flyers centre Jeff Carter and New Jersey Devils left wing Patrik Elias were named the NHL's Three Stars for the week ending Dec. 21.

Eriksson scored an NHL-leading six goals in three games last week, helping the Stars earn five of six possible points.

Yankees, Wang agree to terms

MLB The New York Yankees and starting pitcher Chien-Ming Wang agreed to a one-year, \$5 million US contract yesterday, avoiding arbitration.

Following back-to-back 19-win campaigns, the Taiwanese-born Wang went 8-2 with a 4.07 earned-run average in 15 starts in 2008 before being placed on the disabled list with a foot injury in June.

'Melo to miss two games

NBA Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony will miss the club's next two games because of a right elbow contusion. The Nuggets did not go into much detail, saying only that Anthony will sit

out the home-and-home series against Portland last night and tonight to rest his ailing right elbow.

More trouble for Burrell

NFL Suspended New York Giants receiver Plaxico Burress is being sued for rear-ending a car driven by a woman in Florida last May. A document provided by the woman's attorney claims the insurance for Burress' \$140,000 US Mercedes lapsed three days before the crash and he neglected to pay his premiums. Burress is under suspension by the New York Giants for shooting himself Nov. 29 in a nightclub with an illegally carried handgun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canadian GM flies Falcons to playoff spot

High atop the list of most excellent executives in the NFL this year — right up there alongside legendary league luminary **Bill Parcells** — is a former University of Guelph student who once served as a not-so-glorified gopher for the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Were it not for the worst-to-first ascent of Parcells' Miami Dolphins, in fact, **Thomas Dimitroff** would be a shoo-in as the NFL's top exec of 2008.

Last January, Dimitroff accepted an offer to become Atlanta Falcons general manager, a position several established NFLers flat-out rejected. The reason was that the Falcons were dogged — you should pardon the expression — by unprecedented nightmares last year. They were 4-12.

Their franchise quarterback — **Michael Vick** — was jailed because of his role in a dogfighting ring.

Their coach, **Bob Petrino**, quit after 13 games to return to college football.

Desperate, owner **Arthur Blank** turned to Dimitroff, who was scouting for the New England Patriots. Dimitroff hired Jacksonville Jaguars defensive co-ordinator **Mike Smith** as coach, acquired running back **Michael Turner** as a free agent and chose quarterback **Matt Ryan** third overall in the NFL draft.

All three flourished and, on Sunday, the Falcons qualified for the post-sea-

Thomas Dimitroff played football at the University of Guelph.

YorkReport

Marty York

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son.

"Never thought this could happen this year, never," Blank told Metro Sunday after Atlanta's playoff-clinching triumph in Minnesota. "This is the season of miracles, thanks to Thomas."

Those of us who followed the CFL closely in the late 1990s knew Dimitroff as a poorly paid (about \$16,000 a year) front-office employee in Saskatchewan.

After an ordinary stint as a defensive halfback at Guelph, he joined the Riders for odd jobs, ranging from ticket sales to promotions.

Football was in his blood. His father was a football lifer. **Tom Dimitroff** coached and scouted in the CFL and NFL before dying of kidney cancer in 1996.

The junior Dimitroff grew up in Ontario as his dad coached in Ottawa and Hamilton. Tom Sr. continually advised his son to chase his GM dreams by paying his dues. Thus, Thomas did the Ordinary Joe Jobs in Saskatchewan, the World

League of American Football, a Japanese league and then in Cleveland, where he spent much of his time literally painting the Browns' football field.

At 42, Dimitroff is through with behind-the-scenes work in football.

He's

front and centre in Atlanta, toast of the town, architect of an awfully surprising playoff team.

"I gave Thomas years to rebuild our team," Blank said.

"And he did it in months. He's a special guy."

"We're very proud of him. Canada should be proud of him, too."

"The holidays never end!"



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NFL Cold night in Chicago



Lance Briggs and Kevin Payne of the Chicago Bears bring down Ruell Martin of the Green Bay Packers last night. For a complete game recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.



For more sports coverage, visit us online at metronews.ca/sports.

Duffy to wear the "A"

Lower Sackville's Ben Duffy has been named an assistant captain with Team Atlantic for the world under-17 hockey championship in Port Alberni, B.C., starting Dec. 29. The P.E.I. Rocket forward has 25 points in 39 games as a QMJHL rookie. Brandon Gormley of the Moncton Wildcats is captain. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

sports 13

Haligonians solid, not spectacular, in the Q

MATTHEW WUEST
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In recent years, some of the QMJHL's top talent has come from Halifax Regional Municipality.

But with the likes of Sidney Crosby, James Sheppard and Brad Marchand moving on to the pros, the region is suddenly in a bit of a "rebuilding phase" in that department.

Nineteen players from HRM have seen time in the Q this season. Here's a look at the most notable stand-outs (listed with position, team, hometown and stats; * indicates player not from HRM who played major midget hockey here).

F Michael Kirkpatrick*

North Sydney (Saint John), 39-22-15-37-36. The former Dartmouth Subways star has been a revelation at age 18, emerging as the Sea Dogs' top player.

F Alexander Beaton

Lower Sackville (Lewiston), 35-9-14-23-22. Beaton, a former Nova Scotia major midget MVP, is skilled 18-year-old forward on a struggling team.



Lower Sackville's Alexander Beaton is one of the top players on a struggling Lewiston team.

F Steven Anthony

Halifax (Saint John), 38-8-10-18-35. Anthony has long been hyped as a rising star. He's enjoyed solid production but would benefit from a second-half surge if he wants to be selected in the 2009 NHL draft.

F Ben Duffy

Lower Sackville (P.E.I.), 39-12-13-25-2. Nova Scotia's brightest young prospect is in the midst of a terrific

rookie campaign at age 16. He is tied for fifth in rookie scoring and isn't eligible for the NHL draft until 2010.

D Christian Morin

Cole Harbour (Val-d'Or), 33-5-9-14-45. He may be on the Q's worst team, but he's a top defenceman and is one of the league's top hitters with 72.

G Peter Delmas

Bedford (Lewiston), 25 GP, 4.36 GAA, .854 Sv%. He's had a bad year stats-wise on a weak defensive team, but he scored a rare goalie goal ear-

lier this month. Backup Philip Wright of Beaver Bank is also from HRM.

D Alexi Pianosi

Halifax (Victoriaville), 38-1-9-10-30. Pianosi found a new home after a falling out in Moncton, but the skilled offensive blueliner has yet to break out.

D Graham Bona

Spryfield (Halifax), 36-4-8-12-40. The Mooseheads' captain is his team's unofficial leader in ice time and puts in an honest effort every night.

F Gerrard Grant

Halifax (Halifax), 32-4-6-10-

13. The 18-year-old has shown flashes of his offensive skill and smarts, but he'll need to get stronger to make an impact.

D Scott McDonald

Waverley (Halifax), 31-0-7-7-18. McDonald is a depth blue-liner who has enjoyed an ice-time boost since Halifax acquired him from Saint John

F Brandon MacLean

Bedford (P.E.I.), 39-3-11-14-56. The 17-year-old former first-round pick of the Rocket is a north-south forward who plays with an edge.

C Zach Sill*

Stewiacke (Moncton), 24-2-9-11-35. The former Cole Harbour McCain captain has battled injuries but is a hard-hitting leader for one of the Q's best teams.

Rainmen busy over holidays

MATTHEW WUEST
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Rick Lewis is not only head coach of the Halifax Rainmen, he also professes to be something of a chef.

"I'm cooking Christmas dinner for the team," Lewis said. "I'm cooking turkey, dressing, greens, sweet potatoes, glazed ham, and I might even throw in a peach cobbler."

Christmas dinner aside, the Rainmen aren't getting much of a holiday break. They will practice on Christmas morning in order to prepare for four Premier Basketball League

pre-season games at The Tower starting on Boxing Day.

"We can't really have any time off," Lewis said. The Rainmen, who opened the PBL pre-season with a 101-95 win over the Quebec City Kebs on Sunday, face the Augusta Lynx on Friday and Sunday at 2 p.m. and the Chicago Throwbacks on Saturday at 7 p.m. and Monday at 8 p.m.

The Rainmen open the PBL regular season on Jan. 2 on the road against the Kebs. Their home-opener is Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Metro Centre, also against the Kebs.

Question raised over Yi's age

NBA A media report carrying school photographs and an identification card has raised doubts about Chinese NBA player Yi Jianlian's age, less than two weeks after 26 local players were found to have falsified birth dates.

New Jersey Nets forward Yi, China's fourth NBA player, is officially 21, but a cloud of suspicion surrounded his age before he was picked sixth by Milwaukee Bucks in the 2007 NBA draft.

Yi has consistently refused to answer questions



Yi Jianlian tem.

A report carried on the Chinese website of Sports Illustrated magazine yesterday but posted on the reporter's blog last week showed a high school identity card carrying the name "Yi Jianlian," and birth date Oct. 27, 1984 — three years older than the NBA player's official birth date.

REUTERS

NBA Yi, Yao face off



New Jersey forward Yi Jianlian, left, reacts as Houston Rockets centre Yao Ming reaches for the rebound in the Rockets/Nets game last night. Houston routed New Jersey 114-91.

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Another quiet day for Moose

QMJHL Despite rumours to the contrary, the Halifax Mooseheads had not pulled the trigger on any trades as of last night, according to general manager Marcel Patenaude.

Patenaude said the winter storm yesterday made it difficult for GMs around the QMJHL to arrange trades but said he was hopeful things would pick up today, the fourth day of the final trade period. Six trades have been made league-wide.

Patenaude will take a long look at dealing his best player, Logan MacMillan, in order to hasten their rebuilding process.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL		YESTERDAY'S RESULTS	
Pittsburgh	4	Buffalo	3 (OT)
Toronto	6	Atlanta	2
Phoenix	at	Edmonton	
Anaheim	at	Vancouver	
TONIGHT'S GAMES			
Boston	at	New Jersey	
Atlanta	at	N.Y. Islanders	
Washington	at	N.Y. Rangers	
Ottawa	at	Philadelphia	
Los Angeles	at	Columbus	
Dallas	at	Toronto	
Tampa Bay	at	Pittsburgh	
Nashville	at	Florida	
St. Louis	at	Detroit	
Carolina	at	Minnesota	
Phoenix	at	Colorado	
Anaheim	at	Calgary	
Vancouver	at	San Jose	

QMJHL		SCORING LEADERS	
G	A	P	
Masse, Dru	26	35	61
L-McNicoll, Sha	25	34	59
Riendeau, Dru	25	33	58
Petersen, Sha	18	32	50
Petit, BaC	12	38	50
Pistilli, Sha	24	25	49
Mahbod, Dru	20	29	49
Byron, Gat	13	35	48
Hoffman, Dru	23	24	47
Slaney, CB	18	29	47

It's perfume, but it's not too perfumey. This organic fragrance smells softly of green tangerine, rose and jasmine. Premiere de Mai Perfume by Florascent, \$99 (U.S.), saffronrouge.com. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Money doesn't buy happiness

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

Next time someone in an expensive SUV cuts you off, take solace in this: Money can buy fancy cars, but it can't buy happiness.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MD studied happiness from a scientific perspective, including its genetic, psychological, sociological and biological underpinnings.

They found that it's not the almighty dollar that makes people happy, but rather a sense of purpose. This may be a good message to remember as we head into the holidays during a tough recession, when many have less spending money. Although living in abject poverty is not conducive to happiness, once you have the basic things you need in life,

higher levels of income don't increase happiness.

Happiness can be measured — but not bought, scientists reported in the December issue of Mayo Clinic Women's HealthSource.

Your age and stage of life also have an effect on happiness. Middle age is a particularly stressful time of life, according to a study of about two million people in almost 80 countries. Mental distress peaks for women at around 40 and for men at around 50. Later in life, in your 60s and 70s, you tend to be more content. (Perhaps because the kids with their clutter have moved away?)

Social connectedness is another factor that increases happiness. This may help explain why women, on the whole, are happier than men. While women tend to join clubs, classes, and social groups, men — especially older men — often allow themselves to become socially isolated. Although they may not initially realize it, this ultimately makes men less happy than women.

Life circumstances cannot be ignored in measur-



Happiness can be measured — but not bought, scientists report.

ing happiness: Events that occur — good or bad — definitely have an effect on well-being, but some people are quite resilient even in the face of negative circumstances. Genes play a role here, perhaps even accounting for as much as half of individual differences in well-being. Thinking positively, or seeing the

world through rose-coloured glasses, may be largely genetic. Optimistic people tend to live longer.

Gaining more education boosts happiness, probably because it provides more choices in life. Not surprisingly, so does excellent health. Health and happiness are closely tied to each other.

When innocence goes up for sale

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

Sex talk with Josey



But, the fact is, there's really no way to prove whether or not a girl has done it.

You have to wonder how Mary got everyone to believe she was a pregnant virgin. Sure, that whole Immaculate Conception was a pretty clever ruse but Joseph had to be at least a little suspicious on their wedding night.

I wondered the same thing when I heard guys were bidding millions to be 22-year-old San Diego-based Natalie Dylan's first. Earlier this fall, Dylan (not her real name) auctioned off her virginity to the highest bidder in order to help pay for graduate school to become a marriage and family therapist. Bids ranged up to \$3.8 million. If I'm spending that kind of dough, I'd want proof.

But, the fact is, there's really no way to prove whether or not a girl has done it. The most popular idea that an intact hymen is proof of her virginity is completely false, says Hanne Blank, American historian and author of *Virgin: The Untouched History*. Hymens run the gamut, says Blank, from thick and resilient to

thin and fragile, making them easy to break in a myriad of ways and therefore lousy indicators of whether a young woman has had intercourse.

In fact, medical research isn't really sure why women even have a hymen. Some research suggests that it is simply vestigial tissue, that is tissue that possibly once had a function in a different evolutionary stage but has since become redundant, much like our appendix.

Unfortunately, says Blank, they found a use for it when men become landowners and they needed to know who their kids were so they could hand down their property (known as the paternity-property hypothesis). The easiest way to do this was to marry a verified virgin. And proving that this flimsy bit of membrane was still intact seemed a plausible enough method of verification. Except, as mentioned, given its flimsy nature, the state of a woman's hymen is a lousy way to "prove" virginity. As result, people have come up with all kinds of ways to create this "proof," like inserting a vial of pig's blood in the young woman's vagina on her wedding night so it would burst and stain the sheets or undergoing hymen restoration surgery, increasingly popular among mostly Muslim immigrants in Europe who want to have their virginity "restored" for marriage.

Saving your virginity until marriage is a personal choice made for health, moral and/or religious reasons. Fine. But undergoing surgery to "restore" your virginity or spending millions for a one-night stand with a virgin seems like a high price to pay for something you can't even prove. In the business world, this would be considered a really bad investment.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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HOW TO TURN HIM ON

Men can be mysterious creatures, especially when it comes to what turns them on. Wouldn't it be great to know exactly what gets him hot? Read what real men say gets them in the mood.

Getting all hot and bothered starts with just getting together. Let your man know when the time is right and he'll be more than happy to skip out on a boys night out in exchange for what you have in mind.

Ask your guy to tell you where he likes

to be touched. There are more than just the obvious hotspots. Even better, try to figure it out together.

Being confident in bed is sexy. Don't force something you're not comfortable with. Stick with what feels right and it'll enhance the mood for the both of you.

(continued online...)

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Madagascar 2 dominates foreign box offices

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa hurdled to the forefront of the foreign box office with weekend sales of \$33.5 million from 56 territories. The animated film opened in 10 markets and was welcomed in the No. 1 spot by Italy and Australia, as well as Hong Kong and New Zealand. **REUTERS**

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Entertainment

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

**Hyped hair**

Say good-bye to Robert Pattinson's sexy tousled locks. The *Twilight* star caused a major frenzy when he stepped out this weekend with a new crew cut. **PEOPLE.COM**

Doubt a dream for Davis

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Viola Davis may get recognized mostly for playing the tiny role of a crack mother in the 2002 drama Antwone Fisher, but that's about to change — even if it's not for a boost in screen time.

With one lengthy, powerful scene in the upcoming drama *Doubt*, Davis isn't just holding her own opposite Meryl Streep, she's winning the hearts of moviegoers and critics. Another modest part for the 43-year-old, self-described "working actor," it's already garnered her an award from the National Board of Review and some very juicy Oscar buzz.

It's certainly not an accolade that's undeserved. In *Doubt* — it opens Christmas Day — Davis plays the mother of a child suspected

of being victimized by a Catholic priest in 1960s New York.

When confronted by the alarmed school principal (Streep), Davis introduces a startling perspective. It's a rich, revelatory scene that has been described as the "crucible of the story."

Not lost on Davis, she developed her own 50-page biography of the character before filming began.

"I'm a neurotic actor, are you kidding me? I'm a theatre geek, I work on neuroses," Davis said. "When you only have one scene ... you're bringing a whole life into that scene with you."

Besides, when you're working opposite Streep, one of the silver screen's legends, you want to have your act together. "(It feels like) a big tornado hit just like in the *Wizard of Oz*," Davis said proudly.

Winslet explores post-war guilt

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Based on a plot description, *The Reader* sounds like a conventional piece of Hollywood's end-of-the-year awards mongering. After all, it is a tragic love story told over the backdrop of the Holocaust.

However, dismissing the movie on this level would do it a disservice. Much like the award-winning Bernhard Schlink novel that it's based on, the film is actually a morally complex story about the challenges that the young people of post-Second World War Germany faced when accepting the atrocities carried out by the previous generation.

The *Reader* might start as a romance between Kate Winslet and a young boy, but things change drastically

Kate Winslet stars in the morally complex story *The Reader*.

when the boy discovers that Winslet's character was once a guard at a concentration camp.

Dealing with the Holocaust and Germany's post-war guilt without needlessly moralizing or sentimentalizing the subject is no easy task, but director Stephen Daldry (*The Hours*) jumped at the opportunity.

"It was always something that I've wanted to do," he

says. "I hope audiences have as many different reactions as possible. I think it is a complex story and there is a great ambiguity to the book. One of the things we tried very hard to do was to maintain that ambiguity."

Daldry's approach to the material is admirable, but his film never would have worked without a talented actress to take on the lead role of the illiterate, Nazi, cra-

Movie profile

dle-robber Hannah Smitz. Winslet was a fan of the book, but despite how much she enjoyed playing the role, even she refuses to forgive the atrocities of her own character.

"My job as the actress is to understand the character and ultimately love them. And I did love Hannah, because I understood her profoundly. Did I sympathize with her? Yes, but that doesn't mean that I sympathize with SS guards in general, not at all. I don't forgive her," says Winslet.

"But that's what I love about the film. It's not a film about forgiveness or reconciliation. It's a story about regret, because you don't choose who you fall in love with." The *Reader* opens Christmas Day.

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Vanishing acts

Shows stuck in television twilight zone

Most TV shows exit the airwaves with a flurry of headlines memorializing their demise. Sometimes, though, a program fades from the spotlight into a scheduling twilight zone: Neither declared dead nor returning.

Here's the lowdown on some missing-in-action titles from this year that most expected to see again but which have no airdates on the horizon:

NBC'S AMERICAN GLADIATORS: Gladiators ready? No, gladiators are not ready. This competition-series revival enjoyed terrific ratings for its initial run during the Hollywood writers strike early this year. A second season launched in May and suffered a sharp drop in viewers, with ratings fading throughout its summer run. NBC has not mentioned Gladiators on the record, but it's considered cancelled.

FOX'S THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: Another strike-era reality hit, this, too, saw a ratings decline during its

summer run. Unlike Gladiators, though, Truth isn't very expensive, and Fox has shot unaired episodes for a new season. Given the troubled economy and the show's controversial content, sources said garnering advertiser support hasn't been easy. No airdate is planned for Truth, but with episodes in the can, a summer run might be tempting.

CBS' ELITEXC SATURDAY NIGHT FIGHTS: CBS planned four experimental off-brand specials and aired three, two of which performed well among younger demographics. With EliteXC declaring bankruptcy in October, though, the fourth special is not happening. CBS could align with another mixed-martial-arts partner but has not found or sought one.

FOX'S 'TIL DEATH AND ABC'S ACCORDING TO JIM: Both are modestly rated, critically indifferent sitcoms produced by their networks' sister studios that fill schedule holes when

needed. Death is off the air, but a midseason appearance is likely. Jim will leave the air shortly, and ABC plans to air its remaining 12 episodes in the summer unless called into action earlier.

REUTERS

IntelleVision

Rick McGinnis



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GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt



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HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/23/08	31	31	31	ABC News (N)	ABC Wld News	Inside Edition	Environmental	Grinch Stole Christmas	Rediscovered (N)	ABC's the List		
	7	7	7	ASN The Road to Avonlea		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye		Chasing Christmas (2005, Drama)	Tom Arnold.	The Mentalist		
	11	11	11	CBC Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Miracle on 34th Street *** (1994, Fantasy)			CBC News: The National	The Hour		
	2	2	2	CBC-F Union-force	Pyramide (SC)	Antarctique	La Petite vie (SC)	(8:57) La Petite vie (SC)	Grand Rire de Québec	Le Téléjournal		
	32	32	32	CBS News (N)	Evening News	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Home for the Holidays	NCIS "Requiem" (HDTV)	The Mentalist		
	69	69	69	CFTM TVA 18 heures	Les Gags	Devine qui ** (2005, Comédie)	Bernie Mac, Zoe Saldana.		Musicographie René Angélil.	TVA 22 heures		
	6	6	6	CIHF Entertainment	ET Canada	Painkiller Jane		House (HDTV PA)	NCIS "Requiem" (HDTV)	News (N)		
	9	9	9	CJCH Corner Gas	Hollywood	Law & Order: SVU		Stolen Miracle (2001, Drama)	Leslie Hope.	News (N)		
	10	10	10	ELTV (6) EastLink Television				Podium TV	EastLink Television			
	36	36	36	FOX Deal-No Deal	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	House (HDTV PA)	(10:01) Fringe	Fox First		
primetime	12	12	12	NBC News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	Law & Order (HDTV)	Law & Order: SVU	Law/Ord SVU		
	29	29	29	NW Business	CBC News	Fortune	The Hour		CBC News: The National	Snowdon		
	4	4	4	PBS-B NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Greater Boston	One on One	Nova (HDTV) (DVS)			Nature (HDTV)		
	35	35	35	PBS-D NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Business Rpt.	Worldfocus	Nova (HDTV) (DVS)			Frontline		
	68	68	68	TQS (6:30) Le Retour (SC)	Catherine (SC)	Piégé Zézé	Un Noël pour l'éternité (2006, Fantastique)	Jay Mohr. (SC)		110 pour cent		
	23	96	96	BNN Business News	Headline	Market Call	Commodities	Workopolis TV	Business News	Squeeze Play		
	18	18	18	CNN (5) The Situation Room	Lou Dobbs Tonight			Campbell Brown: No Bias	Larry King Live	Cooper 360		
	54	54	54	GOLF Drive, Chip & Putt	Top 10	Top 10	Top 10	Top 10	Top 10	Top 10		
	52	52	52	RSE Prime Time Sports	NHL Hockey	Ottawa Senators at Philadelphia Flyers. (HDTV) (Live)				Overtime	Sportsnet Con.	
	55	55	55	SCOR Hockey Talk	Game On	Cabby Unlimit	Court Surfing	NBA news, scores and highlights.			Score Tonight	
news	45	45	45	SPD Unique Whips	Pinks	Pass Time	Low Life	Low Life	Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Hot Import	
	53	53	53	TSN Off the Record	SportsCentre	Junior Hockey: IIHF World Championship Pre-Competition			SportsCentre	NHL Hockey		
	43	43	43	FAM Zoey 101	Life Derek	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School
	44	44	44	TOON (6:30) A Dennis the Menace Christmas		Gotta Catch Santa Claus		Stardust		Futurama	American Dad	
	26	26	26	TREE Frst Snw-Wint	Santa Coming to Town	Nght Grdn	Red-Nosed Reindeer		Backyardigans	Maggie-Beast	Comfy Couch	
	27	27	27	YTV Charlie Brown	Flint Christmas	Red-Nosed Reindeer	Malcolm-Mid.	Fresh Prince	Fries That?	Mystery Hnt.	Martin Mystery	
	16	16	16	A&E Cold Case Files		CSI: Miami "Legal"		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)	Manhunters	
	70	70	70	APTN News		Wings-Canada	Great Towns	Wapos Bay	Rez Rides	Kidz in the Wood (1996, Comedy)	Julia Duffy	
	50	50	50	BET 106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live				House Party 2 ** (1991, Musical Comedy)	Kid 'N Play.	Keyshia Cole		
	37	37	37	BRVO Street Legal		Desperate Housewives		Celtic Angels at Christmas		Come Into the Parlour	On, Mountain	
sports	25	25	25	CMT Chevy Cross Canada Countdown "Christmas"				Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Three Wishes
	49	49	49	COM Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	S. Silverman
	153	153	153	COURT Killer Next Door		The Investigators		Cops Uncut	Dumb Criminal	Riots: Mobs Out of Control	Investigators	
	38	38	38	DISC Naked Science		Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Dirty Jobs
	34	48	48	HGTV Holmes on Homes		House Hunters	Property Virgin	Pure Design	Style	Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Colin-Justin
	46	46	46	HIST Outlaw Bikers		NCIS "Light Sleeper"		Outlaw Bikers		Ax Men "Black Friday"		NCIS
	17	17	17	MM disBand (N)	Technical Diff.	Degrassi: Next	Instant Star	Much Comes Clean (N)		Punk'd	Punk'd	Punk'd
	19	19	19	MMM All Access		News Special	Where You At	Where You At	Where You At	Celine Dion: Woman		Celeb Wrestle
	201	201	201	M1 (6:45) The Reef (2006)		(8:15) Shrek the Third ** (2007, Comedy)				Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber		
	48	23	23	OLN American Gladiators		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter
family	51	51	51	PEACH Seinfeld	Friends	House-Payne	House-Payne	The Mighty Ducks ** (1992, Comedy)		Emilio Estevez.		Cheers
	206	206	206	PIX (6:15) Wayne's World 2		Lucky Numbers * (2000, Comedy)	John Travolta.			Airplane! *** (1980, Comedy)		
	67	67	67	RDI Le Journal RDI	RDI en direct	RDI en direct	Chine	Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct
	39	39	39	SHOW EastEnders	Vivienne Vyle	Recipe for a Perfect Christmas (2005, Romance-Comedy)				Testees	Trailer Park	House
	40	40	40	SLICE X-Weighted "Diane"		Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Date My Ex: Jo & Slade		Rich Bride, Poor Bride		End of Leash
	47	47	47	SPACE Stargate SG-1				Star Trek: Next Gener.		The Dresden Files		Zombieman
	14	14	14	SPIKE CSI: NY (HDTV)		CSI: NY (HDTV)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		UFC Unleashed		Unleashed
	57	98	98	STAR Sarah	Hollywood	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		TMZ (N)	Sarah	Look-A-Like	Off the Leash	Tonight Show
	21	21	21	TLC The 750-Pound Man		World's Heaviest Man		World's Heaviest Man		Mystery Diagnosis		Med. Examiner
	56	34	34	TROP Planet Soap	Big Screen	Beverly Hills, 90210		Planet Soap	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
cable variety	20	20	20	TV5 Que.-champion	Journal de Fr2	Toute une histoire		Fabuleuse		Les Sapins de Noël		Création pub
	28	28	28	V Doc "Easy Money"		Murder, She Wrote		Bless-Father	On the Buses	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)		
	60	97	97	VIVA Judging Amy				Commander In Chief		The West Wing		Encounters
	22	22	22	W (6) Stolen Miracle (2001)		Friends	Will & Grace	Shopping Bags	Shopping Bags	Crazy for Christmas (2005, Drama)		
	251	251	251	WGN Be-Millionaire	Evening News	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	NBA Basketball	Chicago Bulls at Detroit Pistons. (HDTV) (Live)			

critics' corner

Miracle on 34th Street

Even if your heart belongs to the 1947 original with Edmund Gwenn, Maureen O'Hara and Natalie Wood, this 1994 re-make of the holiday classic isn't half bad. Richard Attenborough plays the store Santa who believes with all his heart that he's the real deal, with Elizabeth Perkins and Mara Wilson as the cynical mother and daughter he has to convince. 8 PM on CBC



10th Annual A Home for the Holidays With Faith Hill

The country singer lends extra star power to the latest edition of the annual special that advocates adoption. As always, it offers true stories of families that have benefited from taking in a new member. Other performers include Gavin Rossdale, Jamie Foxx and Tim McGraw — aka Mr. Hill. Kristin Chenoweth, Patricia Heaton, Rene Russo and Martin Short also are scheduled to appear. 9 PM on CBS

Rediscovered

For every Macaulay, Dakota and Haley Joel who makes it big in showbiz, there are hundreds of Johnny and Janie Does who tried but missed out. The producers of this new special went through decades of audition tapes from young hopefuls and brought five of them, now grown, to Los Angeles for another chance to show their stuff — on TV. Donny and Marie Osmond host the special. 10 PM on ABC

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Rumours have been running rampant that Twilight star Taylor Lautner, who played Jacob Black, will be replaced in the sequel, New Moon, tvguide.com reports. **IMDB.com**

Twilight's Taylor to be replaced in sequel?

Celebrity Buzz

Matt details road trip adventure

PEOPLE Matthew McConaughey was rescued by an 82-year-old Mexican woman named Matty after his truck broke down, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actor was on a 14-day road trip to Baja, Calif. with a friend when the pair's vehicle broke down in the middle of the desert.

Matty loaned McConaughey her 1981 Isuzu truck with 263,000 miles on it, he says. "That truck got us to a place where we could get the gear to fix my truck and get back on the road."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Nick Cannon's ex speaks out about Mariah marriage

RELATIONSHIP Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon's secret wedding may have surprised fans, but it also caught someone else off guard — Cannon's ex-girlfriend Christina Milian, people.com reports.

"I was like, 'Really?' It just seemed like a weird match," says the singer and actress tells Rap-Up magazine. "But I was happy for him. I always feel like Nick works hard to get what he wants, whether that be women — that's how he got me."

"He's a beautiful person," she says. "Regardless of what I felt in the past at the time, I actually forgive him and I'm very much over that."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Amy's topless vacay splashed on tabs

PEOPLE Amy Winehouse, who's had an ongoing battle with drugs and erratic behavior since she shot to fame in 2007, is making a splash across the British tabloids thanks to her revealing holiday, where she was photographed on the beach and on her balcony sans top, popeater.com reports.

Still, though the tabs are swarming over the nudity, they're generous with the compliments when it comes to her appearance.

The Daily Mail says Winehouse

"looks the picture of health as she piles on the pounds" in the new photos, in which it's obvious she's put some pounds on her once-frail frame.

The Sun was a bit less congratulatory, running a video of and describing a topless dance that Winehouse did on the balcony of her St. Lucia hotel room. They describe it as a "bizarre balcony boogie," saying Winehouse "was caught on video as she lurched from one side to another, waving her arms."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Britney and Benji rumours false

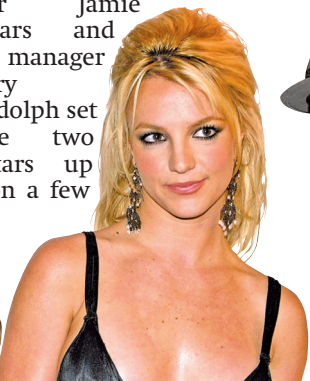
DATING As one might have guessed, all those rumours linking Britney Spears and Benji Madden were completely false, popeater.com reports. The singers definitely aren't dating, Spears' rep told E! News. "The claims made by In Touch are completely false ... There is not an ounce of truth to any of it," she said.

Last week, In Touch magazine claimed Spears' father Jamie Spears and her manager Larry Rudolph set the two stars up on a few

dates — creating an instant love connection. But have no fear. Spears isn't jumping back into the dating game with Paris Hilton's ex just yet, says her rep.

Since the release of her album Circus, Spears has been linked to several celebrities including Chace Crawford, Jesse Metcalfe and Michael Phelps. None of which panned out or have been confirmed.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Sam hospitalized for depression?

PEOPLE Samantha Ronson is reportedly suffering from depression, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 31-year-old DJ was accompanied by girlfriend Lindsay Lohan as she visited Los Angeles' Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre on Sunday — less than a day after it was reported she had been making frantic phone calls to friends complaining of stress and exhaustion.

A source told Life and Style Weekly magazine: "Samantha was calling around. She has been suffering from depression and from

lack of food and sleep. Lindsay has been helping her through this as she has been through it herself two years ago."

Doctors were reportedly called to Samantha's home shortly before she visited the medical facility.

Despite her trip to Cedars-Sinai being described as "relatively minor," witnesses say Samantha was taken into the hospital in a wheelchair through the emergency entrance.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Ritchie rebounds with heiress Khan

RELATIONSHIP Just as their divorce settlement was making news, Madonna's ex-husband, Guy Ritchie, appeared to be celebrating his freedom and the holidays with someone new — millionaire heiress Jemima Khan, people.com reports.

The two attended a London dinner party together earlier this month at the home of public relations honcho Matthew Freud and his wife, Elisabeth Murdoch, daughter of media mogul Rupert Murdoch, reports London's Telegraph.

Khan, 33, is the socialite

daughter of Lady Annabel Goldsmith (for whom the London nightclub was named) and the late financier Sir James Goldsmith. In 1995, she married Pakistani cricket player, the now-retired Imran Khan, and they had two sons, now 12 and nine. The couple divorced in 2004, and she was later attached to actor Hugh Grant, though that relationship has ended, say British newspapers.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Sandler dresses up as a princess for storytime

PEOPLE Adam Sandler dresses up as a princess to read his daughters stories, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Bedtime Stories actor and comedian likes to get into character when he regales tales to daughters Sadie, two, and newborn Sunny, who is a month old.

Adam, 42, said: "I like to dress up as the lead character in whatever story I am reading. This is a little weird because my daughter loves the Disney princesses. But you'd be surprised at how good I look in a ball gown."

"I hold the storybook and make up my own stories with the characters. This backfired when my daughter started watching movies and realized that Cinderella didn't drive for NASCAR."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



'Boy' Beyoncé jogs incognito in park

PEOPLE Beyoncé Knowles likes dressing as a boy, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer dons male clothes so she can go running in New York incognito.

Beyoncé, 27, said: "I love being able to run in Central Park. Just me and my trainer. I dress up like a boy and then no one knows it's me. I just keep moving."

Beyoncé's latest hit If I Were a Boy details what she would like to do if she were able to swap gender for a day.

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